

Accusation regarding Abū Bakr and ‘Umar not being present at the Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

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BY:

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Transliteration key

إِ - إً	ض - ضـ
آ - آا	ط - طـ
ب - بـ	ظ - ظـ
ت - تـ	ع - عـ
ث - ثـ	غ - ghـ
ج - جـ	ف - fـ
ح - حـ	ق - qـ
خ - خـ	ك - kـ
د - دـ	ل - lـ
ذ - ذـ	م - mـ
ر - رـ	ن - nـ
ز - زـ	و - w, uـ
س - سـ	ه - hـ
ش - شـ	ي - y, iـ
ص - صـ	

Accusation regarding Abū Bakr and ‘Umar not being present at the Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

The accusation of not being present for the bathing, shrouding and burial

The critics of the Ṣahābah رضي الله عنهم level the accusation against the senior Ṣahābah (more so upon Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنهم), that they did not participate in the ghusl, shrouding, and burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They were deprived of this virtue on account of their giving preference to matter of khilāfah; proceeding instead to Saqīfah Banī Sā‘idah and where they remained disputing matters. On the other hand, the ghusl, shrouding and burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was carried out by Sayyidunā ‘Alī رضي الله عنهم. It is narrated:

عن عروة ان أبا بكر وعمر لم يشهدا دفن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وكانت في الأنصار دفن قبل ان يرجعوا

‘Urwah narrates that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar did not witness the burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they were amongst the Anṣār and he was buried before they returned.

In order to further this objection, those who object have composed the following poem which they recite:

When the Ṣahābah were taking care of the world.

Muṣṭafā was lying alone without a shroud.

Answer

This allegation, however, is entirely contrary to historic fact, as we shall discuss in the following pages. It is based on a narration that is not from the *Sīḥāḥ al-Sittah*, but rather from a book which did not undertake to narrate only that which is authentic. In books of this category, all varieties of narrations are gathered and all forms of subject matter compiled (with the onus resting upon the reader to authenticate the material before substantiating therefrom).

Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ﷺ has mentioned this in *Tuhfah Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah*:

Those books which the Shī‘ah quote in their criticisms and objections upon the Ahl al-Sunnah; firstly, they are rare and their compilers did not undertake to compile only what is authentic therein. In fact, they gathered all sorts of narrations, authentic and unauthentic, intending to review it later...¹

Moreover, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ﷺ has clarified this matter in ‘Ujālah Nāfi‘ah that according to the Muḥaddithīn, these books fall into the third category; and the narration quoted above is from the books of this same category. Every type of narration has been compiled therein and there were no criteria of authenticity employed in its compilation.

Furthermore, it needs to be clarified that this narration presented by the ‘critics’ has been taken from *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah* which has a *Munqaṭi‘* (disjointed) isnād and the text is *Shādh* (uncommon).

We shall firstly discuss the manner in which this narration is *munqaṭi‘*, followed thereafter with an explanation regarding the uncommon nature of this narration, which will prove that this narration contradicts historic fact and is not worthy of acceptance.

Reason for disjointedness

The narration is transmitted by ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr al-Tābi‘ī. ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr was not yet born at the time of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. In fact, the biographers have written that ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr was born towards the end of the khilāfah of Sayyidunā ‘Umar ﷺ, or the beginning of the khilāfah of Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ﷺ. Refer to:

1. *Tadhkirat al-Huffāz*, vol. 1 p. 62.
2. *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 p. 183, 184.

¹ *Tuhfah Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah*, p. 41.

Therefore, it is certain that the narrator was not present when the incident took place. We have also learnt that someone else mentioned this to 'Urwah later on. It is thus evident that this narration is *Munqati'*.

Reason for being Shādh

The reason for the above narration being Shādh is that in comparison to this narration, there are other well-known narrations of this incident that have a continuous chain and they are *Şahīh* and accepted according to the scholars of ḥadīth. In these well-known narrations, it is clearly stated that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were present at the time of the demise of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Subsequently, a few well-known narrations are presented below from the books of ḥadīth, wherein the subject matter is clear.

Other narrations

Imām al-Tirmidhī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ لَهُ transmits the following narration from Sālim ibn 'Ubayd al-Ashjaī, stating first:

عن سالم بن عبيد (الاشجعي) وكانت له صحبة

From Sālim ibn 'Ubayd al-Ashjaī and he was a *Şahābī*.

فقال (الصديق) لي إنطلق فانطلقت معه فجاء هو والناس قد دخلوا على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال (الصديق) يا أيها الناس أفرجووا لي فافرجوا له فجاء حتى أكب عليه ومسه فقال إنك ميت وإنهم ميتون ثم قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أقبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قال نعم فلعلوا أن قد صدق قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنصلي على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قال نعم وقالوا وكيف؟ قال يدخل قوم فيكبرون ويصلون ثم يخرجون ثم يدخل قوم فيكبرون ويصلون ثم يخرجون حتى يدخل الناس قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أيدفن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال نعم قالوا أين؟ قال في المكان الذي قبض الله فيه روحه فان الله لم يقبض روحه إلا في مكان طيب فلعلوا أنه صدق ثم أمرهم أن يغسله بنوابيه

The famous Muḥaddith Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, reports the incident from *Ibn Mājah* and *Tabarānī* in the following words:

وعن سالم عن عبيد وكان من أصحاب الصفة... فقال (الصديق رضي الله عنه) أوسعوا فأوسعوا له فأكب عليه ومسه قال (الصديق رضي الله عنه) إنك ميت وإنهم ميتون قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مات رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قال نعم فلعلوا أنه كما قال قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أصلح على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال يدخل قوم فيكرون ويذعون ويصلون ثم ينصرفون ويجي آخرون حتى يغروا قالوا يا صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أيدفن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال نعم قالوا وأين يدفن قال حيث قضى فإن الله تبارك وتعالى لم يتفضله إلا في بقعة طيبة فلعلوا أنه كما قال ثم قام عندكم صاحبكم فامرهم يغسلونه... الخ

The translation of both these narrations is:

While explaining the conditions and incidents of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Sālim ibn ‘Ubayd ، سالم بن عباد، who was from among the companions of the Suffah, (the narrator of both these narrations) said, “I informed Abū Bakr of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, so he (Abū Bakr) said to me, ‘Come with me.’ So I went with him and he reached the people, who had entered upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He then said, ‘O people! Make room for me,’ so they made room for him. Abū Bakr turned to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he leaned and kissed Rasūlullāh ﷺ on the forehead. He then recited, ‘Verily you will (also) perish and they too will perish.’

Those present asked, ‘Has Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away?’

He said, ‘Yes, he has passed away.’

They knew that he had spoken the truth, (whereas they were in confusion before this)."

The people then asked, ‘O companion of the Rasūl ﷺ, should we perform Ṣalāt al-Janāzah upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ?’

He said, ‘Yes!’

They then asked, ‘How will the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah be performed?’

He explained that a group will come; they will recite takbīr, supplicate, recite durūd and then leave. Another group will then enter; they will recite takbīr, supplicate, recite durūd and then leave. In this way, everyone will perform the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ.’

The people present then said; ‘O companion of Rasūl ﷺ will Rasūlullāh ﷺ be buried?’

He replied, ‘Yes!’

They asked, ‘Where will he be buried?’

He replied, ‘The place where Allah takes the soul of His Nabī, for verily Allah does not take their souls except at the purest of places.’

They knew that he was speaking the truth. He then ordered the paternal family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to perform the ghusl (Sayyidunā ‘Alī رضي الله عنه being amongst them).¹

The narration of Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah

Just as the above narration is reported from Sālim ibn ‘Ubayd رضي الله عنه, similarly a narration is reported from Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها:

عن عائشة قالت لما قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إختلفوا في دفنه فقال أبو بكر سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال ما قبض الله نبيا إلا في الموضع الذي يحب أن يدفن فيه إدفونه في موضع فراشه

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, there was a difference of opinion regarding his burial. Abū Bakr said, “I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, ‘Allah does not take the soul of a Nabī, except in the place where He desires he be buried. Bury him at the spot of his bed.’”²

Subsequently, Rasūlullāh ﷺ was buried at this spot.

The ḥadīth narrated by Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās

The narrations of Sālim ibn ‘Ubayd and Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها have passed. After this, the narration of Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه is presented, from *Ibn Mājah*:

1 *Shamā'il al-Tirmidhī*, p. 600; *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (Bayhaqī), vol. 3 p. 395, vol. 4 p. 30, vol. 8 p. 145; *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 5 p. 182 from *Ibn Mājah* and *al-Tabarānī*.

2 *Tirmidhī*, vol. 1 p. 121.

عن ابن عباس قال لما أرادوا أن يحفروا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعثوا إلى أبي عبيدة بن الجراح... لقد اختلف المسلمين في المكان الذي يحفر له فقال قاتلون يدفن في مسجده قال قاتلون يدفن مع أصحابه فقال أبو بكر إنني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما قبضنبي إلا دفن حيث يقبض... الخ

It is narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, “When they intended to bury Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they sent for Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh... the Muslims differed with regards to the place where he should be buried. Some said that he should be buried in the Masjid. Some said that he should be buried with his Ṣahābah. Abū Bakr said, “I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, ‘A Nabī is not taken, except that he is buried where his soul is taken.’”¹

The Ṣalāt al-Janāzah

Aside from the above mentioned narrations, the narration from Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما regarding the form of the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah has been transmitted by Abū Ya’lā al-Mūsilī in the following words:

ثم أدخل الناس على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يصلون عليه أرسالاً ادخل الرجال حتى إذا فرغ منهم
أدخل النساء حتى إذا فرغ من النساء أدخل الصبيان ولم يؤم الناس على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
أحد دفن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من أوسط الليل ليلة الأربعاء

The people then came in groups to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah. The men entered and performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah. When they completed, the women entered and performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah. When they completed, the children entered and performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah. No person led the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah that was performed over Rasūlullāh ﷺ and he was buried at midnight on Wednesday.²

Supporting narrations

Imām Mālik

In the previous pages we mentioned the narrations from the Muḥaddithīn

¹ *Ibn Mājah*, p. 118.

² *Musnad Abū Ya’lā al-Mūsilī*, vol. 1 p. 45, 46.

regarding the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. We find it appropriate to mention the supporting narration of Imām Mālik رحمه الله as well, where a number of matters have been clarified. Moreover, the presence of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه on this occasion is clearly proven. Imām Mālik رحمه الله says:

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَوَفَّ يَوْمَ الْإِثْنَيْنِ وَدُفِنَ يَوْمَ الثَّلَاثَاءِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ أَفَذَا لَا يَؤْمِنُهُمْ أَحَدٌ فَقَالَ نَاسٌ يَدْفَنُونَهُ عِنْدَ الْمَنْبِرِ وَقَالَ آخَرُونَ يَدْفَنُونَهُ فِي الْبَيْعِ فَجَاءَ أَبُو بَكْرَ الصَّدِيقَ فَقَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَا دُفِنَ نَبِيًّا قَطُّ إِلَّا فِي مَكَانِهِ الَّذِي تَوَفَّ فِيهِ فَحَفَرُ لَهُ فِيهِ فَلَمَّا كَانَ عِنْدَ غَسْلِهِ أَرَادُوا نَزْعَ قَبِيْصِهِ سَعَوْا صَوْتًا يَقُولُ لَا تَنْزَعُوا الْقَمِيصَ فَلَمْ يَنْزَعُ الْقَمِيصَ وَغَسَلُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away on Monday and he was buried on Tuesday. They performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah individually and no one led the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah that was performed. Some people said that Rasūlullāh ﷺ should be buried near the pulpit. Others said that he should be buried in Baqī'. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه said, "I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying that the Nabī should be buried in the place where he passes away." So the grave was dug there for him. At the time of the ghusl, they intended to remove his upper garment. They heard a voice saying, "Do not remove the upper garment." So they did not remove the upper garment and they gave the ghusl while it was on him.¹

The scholars of history and biography

The readers have studied the narrations of the Muḥaddithīn regarding this issue, as well as their explanations. Now, the narrations of the scholars of sīrah, history, and the biographers will be mentioned so that the readers can be at ease regarding this issue. Remember this much, that the following references are provided for the sake of support in proving the above mentioned issues.

Ibn Hishām and Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī

Abū Muhammād 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hishām al-Ma'āfirī (d. 213-218 A.H) writes in his famous *Sīrah Ibn Hishām* on the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

¹ *Muwaṭṭa' Imām Mālik*, p. 212.

وقد كان المسلمين يختلفوا في دفنه وقال قائل ندفنه في مسجده عند المنيب وقال قائل ندفنه مع أصحابه بالبيع وقال أبو بكر إنني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ما قبض النبي إلا دفن حيث يقضى فرفع فراش رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الذي توفى عليه فحضر له تحته ثم دخل الناس على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يصلون عليه أرسلاً دخل الرجال حتى إذا فرغوا دخل النساء حتى إذا فرغ النساء أدخل الصبيان ولم يوم الناس على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أحد

The Muslims had a difference of opinion regarding the burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Some said that he should be buried in Masjid al-Nabawī, whereas others said that he should be buried with his Companions in Jannat al-Baqī'. Abū Bakr said, "I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying that a Nabī should be buried at the spot where he passes away." The bed of Rasūlullāh ﷺ upon which he passed away was lifted and the grave was dug beneath it. The people then entered upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ and performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah in groups. The men entered, and when they completed the women entered, after them the children entered and no one led the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah over Rasūlullāh ﷺ.¹

Ibn Sa‘d, al-Balādhurī, and others

The narrations of Ibn Sa‘d, al-Balādhurī, and others regarding this are presented in the text below:

لما كفن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ووضع على سريره دخل أبو بكر وعمر ف قالا السلام عليك أيها النبي ورحمة الله وبركاته ومعهما نفر من المهاجرين قدر ما يسع البيت فسلموا كما سلم أبو بكر وعمر وصفوا صوفا لا يفهم عليهم أحد فقال أبو بكر وعمر وهما في الصفت الأولى حيال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اللهم إنا نشهد أن قد بلغ ما أنزل عليه ونصح لأمنه وجاهد في سبيل الله حتى أعز الله دينه فيقول الناس آمين ثم يخرجون ويدخل آخرهن حتى صلوا عليه الرجال ثم النساء ثم الصبيان فلما فرغوا من الصلاة تكلموا في موضع قبره ... الخ

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ was shrouded and placed on the bed, then Abū Bakr and ‘Umar entered the room and said, “Peace be upon you, O Nabī, and the mercy and blessings of Allah.” There was a group of the Muhājirīn with them that filled the room. They greeted in the same way as Abū Bakr and ‘Umar greeted. They formed rows and no one led them. Abū Bakr and

¹ Sīrah ibn Hishām, vol. 2 p. 663; Tārīkh ibn Jarīr Tabarī, vol. 3 p. 205.

‘Umar were in the first row, they said, “O Allah, we testify that whatever was revealed upon the Rasūl, he conveyed it and he was a well-wisher for his nation, and he strove in the path of Allah until Allah granted honour to His religion.”

The people were saying: “Āmīn, Āmīn.” Then they left and others entered. The men performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah first, then the women, and finally the children. When they completed the ṣalāh, they spoke about the place of the grave...¹

The other scholars of ḥīrah and history have mentioned that the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah was performed in the same manner. Quoting all their texts will unnecessarily lengthen this treatise, therefore only the references were mentioned.

Summary of the narrations

In summary, according to the scholars of ḥadīth, it is been proven from well-known and accepted narrations, as well as through the supporting narrations of the scholars of ḥīrah and the biographers that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was present on the occasion of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. On this occasion, he had given guidance regarding a number of laws of the shari’ah. For example:

- He verified the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.
- He explained that the close relatives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are most deserving of performing the ghusl.
- He mentioned the method and way of the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah.
- He decided upon the place of burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the light of the ḥadīth.

In all the above matters, whatever guidance Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ gave, all of it was carried out.

¹ *Tabaqāt ibn Sa‘d*, vol. 2 p. 69; *Kitāb Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 1 p. 574; *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5 p. 265; *Sīrah Ḥalabiyah*, vol. 3 p. 394.

Further collaboration

We feel it beneficial to present further collaboration from the books of ḥadīth. However, to avoid making the discussion lengthy, we present just one supporting narration from *al-Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*. Ibn Abī Shaybah رَجُلَ اللَّهِ يَحْمِلُهُ transmits it with his chain:

إِنَّهُمْ شَكُوا فِي قَبْرِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيْنَ يَدْفَنُونَهُ فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ النَّبِيُّ لَا يَحُولُ عَنْ مَكَانِهِ يَدْفَنُ حِينَ يَمُوتُ فَخَفَرُوا لِهِ مَوْضِعَ فِرَاشِهِ

Verily they were in doubt about the grave of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, “Where should they bury him?”

Abū Bakr said, “I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, ‘A Nabī is not moved from his place, he is buried where he passes away.’”

So, the place where his bed lay was dug.¹

Worthy of note

The objectionable narration which the critics have searched for and presented is also mentioned by the same author (Ibn Abī Shaybah رَجُلَ اللَّهِ يَحْمِلُهُ) and it is found in this very same work. We too mentioned the narration of Ibn Abī Shaybah, and that too from the same work as well.

However, the subject matter of both narrations are contradictory. This is because this narration (as quoted by us above) has clarified that on the occasion of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَجُلَ اللَّهِ يَحْمِلُهُ was present and the place of burial was specified and decided in accordance to the explanation that he provided, which was subsequently acted upon.

Thus, the objection raised against Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَجُلَ اللَّهِ يَحْمِلُهُ that he was not present for the ghusl, shrouding, and Ṣalāt al-Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is a fabrication and does not hold any weight. The narration that the objector presented has no basis when compared to the well-known and accepted

¹ *Al-Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*, vol. 4 p. 553.

narrations, and the latter will be termed as Shādh.¹

An important principle

According to the scholars of ḥadīth, there is a principle that needs to be applied on an occasion like this:

الشَّهَادَةُ إِذَا شَدَّ لَا يَقْبِلُ مَا شَدَّ فِيهِ

When a reliable narrator states something contradictory, whatever is contradictory is not accepted from him.

If there is a reliable narrator, and he reports a rare narration—as compared to the well-known narrations—then it will not be accepted. Thus, in light of this principle, the Shādh narration is not worthy of acceptance because it is in contradiction of other reliable and well-known narrations, which cannot be contested.

Another principle

Another principle is also worthy of attention at this juncture. The narrations of the Ṣahābah who were present on the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, such as Sālim ibn ‘Ubayd al-Ashjā‘ī, Umm al-Mu’mīnīn Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah, and Sayyidunā ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما, make it known that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما were present—just as the other Ṣahābah—at the time of the ghusl, shrouding, and burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. In fact, these acts were carried out in accordance with the counsel of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنهما, as we have read previously. The narration of criticism is narrated from a Tābi‘ī. It is thus the statement of ‘Urwah (that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما were not present for the burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ).

Therefore, there is a contradiction between the statements of those involved in the incident and the statement of the Tābi‘ī.

1 A narration which contradicts more reliable narrations.

In such instances, the scholars explain the principle to be applied:

وقول الصحابي رضي الله عنه مقدم على قول التابعي

The statement of a *Şahābī* is given preference over the statement of a *Tābi’ī*.¹

The conclusion is that in the incident dealing with the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the participating *Şahābah* رضي الله عنهم hold the position of eye-witnesses, whereas a *Tābi’ī* during these days holds the position of an absent person and he only narrates what he heard of the incident.

Therefore, in this case, in accordance to the above principle, the explanation given by the *Şahābah* رضي الله عنهم who were present will be accepted and preference will be given to it and the statement of the *Tābi’ī* will be left out and not accepted.

Then, it is also worthy to turn our attention to this point; that as far as our knowledge is concerned, there is no supporting narration for the statement of ‘Urwah. It is sufficient to grade a narration of this nature as not worthy of acceptance when a supporting narration is not found.

An overview of the discussion

The famous scholar, Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Isfaraīnī (d. 471 A.H) mentions the details of the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in his famous work *al-Tabsīr fi al-Dīn* (p. 25-26). Al-Isfaraīnī says that on the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the temporary difference of opinion among the *Şahābah* رضي الله عنهم regarding the place of burial and khalīfah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, all of these matters were solved through the blessings of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Subsequently, he states this in the following texts:

1. On this occasion, there was a difference of opinion among those present, regarding the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

وارتفع هذا الخلاف ببركات أبي بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه

¹ *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5 p. 236.

This difference of opinion was resolved through the blessings of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Moreover, Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه verified the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the confusion came to an end.

- When there was a difference of opinion regarding the place of burial:

فزال هذا الخلاف ببركة الصديق رضي الله عنه

This difference of opinion was removed through the blessings of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه (he stipulated the place of burial).

- Similarly, after the demise of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, there was a difference of opinion between the Muḥājirīn and the Ansār regarding the khilāfah and:

وأتفقوا على قوله (الصديق) فزال هذا الخلاف أيضاً ببركة الصديق

The Sahābah رضي الله عنهم agreed upon the statement of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, (He quoted the ḥadīth: ‘Leaders are from the Quraysh,’) so this difference of opinion was removed through the blessings of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه as well.

In summary, whatever differences of opinion arose, they were solved through the guidance of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and through his blessings, these matters were brought to a closure. May Allah be pleased with him.

Worthy of note

It is very important to note that khilāfah (and Imāmah) has a great status in Islam and the perpetuity of dīn relies on it. Dīn is that specific entity for which Allāh especially sent His Rasūl ﷺ. This is not some general work.

If Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and others went to Saqīfah Banī Sā‘idah, in order to fulfil the duty of khilāfah, then it was for the work of Islam.

Together with this, it is also a reality that after the matter of khilāfah was decided, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه participated in the shrouding and burial etc., as explained previously. Therefore, there is no scope for raising objections at this point.

Counter argument

The response to the criticism given has been presented from our books, in light of the well-known and authentic narrations, and for that all praise is due to Allah (swt). The law of debate is that a person can respond to criticism and objections using that which is accepted according to him. Therefore, in accordance to this law, we have completed the answer.

In order to further strengthen this matter, we mention the response from the books of the Shī'ah in order to silence them. Their books state that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنهما were present at the burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, along with the other Ṣahābah رضي الله عنهم وآله وآلهمة, and none of the Ṣahābah that were present were deprived of this virtue. All of them participated.

This is found in great detail in the books of the Shī'ah. However, it is sufficient to mention three references from their books in order to silence them.

From the references given below, it will be proven that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنهما played an active role in the burial of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the other Ṣahābah رضي الله عنهم وآله وآلهمة were present as well.

1. Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī says:

ثم أدخل عشرة من المهاجرين وعشرة من الأنصار فكانوا يدخلون ويدعون ويخرجون حتى لم يبق أحد
شهد من المهاجرين والأنصار إلا صلى عليه

... Then ten of the Muḥājirīn and ten of the Anṣār entered, they went inside, supplicated, and then left. They continued in this manner until none of the Muḥājirīn and Anṣār remained except that they performed ḥalāt over him.¹

2. Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir رحمة الله عليه says:

عن أبي جعفر (محمد الباقر) قال لما قبض النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صلت عليه الملائكة والمهاجرون
والأنصار فوجا فوجا

¹ Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī, p. 70.

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, the angels, Muḥājirīn and Anṣār performed ṣalāh over him in groups.¹

3. Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir ؓ said:

The form of the Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was that ten people entered the room and they performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah without an Imām. This continued on Monday, Monday evening, and throughout Tuesday, until the evening. All the adults, men and women, including the children, from within Madīnah and the outskirts of Madīnah, all performed the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah over Rasūlullāh ﷺ in this way.²

The summary of the above is that Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ would allow ten of the Muḥājirīn and ten of the Anṣār to enter the room and perform the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah, and they would come out. This continued until there were none of the Muḥājirīn and Anṣār who did not perform the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah over Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

In conclusion, the reliable narrations reported by the Shī‘ah from their Imāms and their Mujtahidīn, make it abundantly clear that on this occasion all the Muḥājirīn, Anṣār, and the entire Madīnah participated in the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and no one was deprived of this virtue. At the forefront were Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ؓ. It is certain that they participated in the Ṣalāt al-Janāzah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ because in these references, there is no mention of any exclusion. Despite these realities, if a person remains on his objection, then it is obstinacy and stubbornness, for which there is no cure.

1 *Usūl al-Kāfi*, p. 286.

2 *Hayāt al-Qulūb*, vol. 2 p. 866.